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TAGS: PGOV PREL ECON JO CH

SUBJECT: KING CONTINUES BROADENING JORDAN'S REACH WITH CHINA VISIT

REF: A. AMMAN 1983

1B. AMMAN 2753

1C. 07 AMMAN 4923

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) Jordan's King Abdullah visited China on September 17-18, his sixth trip to the country, as part of his ongoing effort to broaden Jordan's ties with central Asia and beyond (Ref A). During meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao and other officials, the Jordanian delegation, including Foreign Minister Salah al-Bashir and Jordan Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Khaled Touqan, signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding on uranium exploration and several smaller agreements on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and scientific exchanges (Ref B). During a separate meeting with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, China agreed to make direct grants to Jordan, building on previous investments (Ref C), in order to soften the impact of Jordan's current financial straits.

12. (SBU) Abdullah, during his meeting with President Hu, reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to the One China policy and called on China to take a more active role on the world stage. The King complimented China's "enlightened and sober" stance in an international system facing increased tensions between Moscow and Western governments. Abdullah also said that China's "balanced" approach to the Middle East put it in position to help achieve a peaceful solution regarding Iran's nuclear program and lend "meaningful support" to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

13. (C) Comment: This visit can be seen as a continuation of Abdullah's attempts to expand Jordan's economic and energy ties in Asia. While the GOJ's relationship with the U.S. remains the cornerstone of Jordan's national security policy, the King views diversification in other areas as a prudent course of action in an increasingly multi-polar world. This is particularly true when it comes to seeking investment in Jordan to drive the King's economic growth and job-creation agenda. End comment.

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Beecroft